

# The 2026 Contract Trust Report: How AI Reshaped Contracts in 2025 and What's Next

*What thousands of real-world contracts reveal about trust, risk allocation, and deal friction in modern deals.*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES, January 8, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ --

Today, TermScout released [the 2026 Contract Trust Report](#), a

comprehensive analysis of thousands of commercial agreements evaluated across its platform in 2025. The report examines how contract structure, balance, and clarity influenced deal speed, trust, and outcomes across Sales, Procurement, and Legal teams. There is a consistent pattern across industries and contract types: deals did not slow because organizations applied too much legal rigor. They slowed because teams lacked early, objective signals about risk and trust.

That frustration is reflected in the data.

Based on aggregated insights from thousands of NDAs, DPAs, SaaS agreements, services contracts, and AI-related terms, the report shows that many organizations escalated contracts late in the deal lifecycle because they had no clear way to assess risk upfront. Trust often broke down at handoffs between Sales, Procurement, and Legal, where each function evaluated agreements with different assumptions and incomplete context.

Certain contract traits consistently correlated with faster closes, including balanced risk allocation, clear obligations, and predictable positions. Meanwhile, Procurement teams often over-reviewed low-risk agreements while under-reviewing higher-risk ones, misallocating attention in the absence of effective triage. Across deal types, perceived fairness emerged as a leading indicator of speed: more balanced agreements moved through approval and execution



Thousands of contracts. One clear signal. The 2026 Contract Trust Report reveals how AI is redefining trust, risk, and deal-making.

with fewer escalations and renegotiations.

“These patterns showed up again and again in the data,” Lasley added. “Without early signals, every contract felt urgent. That’s what created unnecessary friction and slowed deals that should have moved quickly.”

“There is currently no standardization around AI contracting clauses, no ‘new norm’...yet. The contracts we’re drafting today are starting points that will look different six months from now,” said Nada Alnajafi, Seasoned Corporate Counsel & Lead, and Founder of Contract Nerds. “Success in 2026 will come from contracts professionals who stay intellectually engaged as frameworks evolve.”

The 2026 Contract Trust Report also points to a broader shift already underway. In 2026, organizations are moving away from blanket contract review toward decision-driven workflows. Contract triage is replacing one-size-fits-all escalation. Trust signals are moving upstream, earlier in the deal, where they can actually influence outcomes. Contract posture is becoming predictive, enabling teams to anticipate whether deals will move forward or stall. Security, privacy, and compliance readiness are increasingly expected as proof rather than assurances, particularly in enterprise buying processes.

This shift is especially visible in AI-related contracting terms, where new standards are taking shape and contract language is becoming more refined.

“Contracts have quietly become the control panel of trust,” said Olga V. Mack, CEO of TermScout. “In 2025, treating every agreement as equally risky created friction and delay because teams lacked early, objective signals. What’s changing now is not speed, but clarity. Contracts are becoming the place where trust is visible early enough to act on it. In 2026, we don’t see contracts getting simpler or calmer. We see shared expectations emerging, even as multiple ways of building trust remain viable.”

For Sales and Procurement leaders, the 2026 Contract Trust Report provides a shared, data-backed language to align across functions, justify investment in modern contract intelligence, reduce unnecessary friction without increasing risk, and modernize workflows for scale and speed. Rather than adding more process, the report points to a different path: clearer signals, earlier decisions, and better outcomes.

### About the 2026 Contract Trust Report

The 2026 Contract Trust Report analyzes aggregated, anonymized data from thousands of commercial agreements evaluated on the TermScout platform, highlighting how contract trust, fairness, and readiness are becoming critical operational drivers of deal velocity and risk management. The report outlines emerging best practices for making trust more measurable (through clearer governance, accountability, and enforceable controls) and offers a forward-

looking view of how organizations can build stronger, more resilient business relationships through smarter contract design.

## About TermScout

TermScout is the leading AI-powered contract certification platform helping modern businesses accelerate revenue, reduce risk, and build trust in agreements by independently verifying contract terms against market standards.

For more information about TermScout, visit [www.TermScout.com](http://www.TermScout.com).

Renee Donis

TermScout

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

[YouTube](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/877834240>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.